



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Johnny Key
Commissioner

**State Board
of Education**

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R. Brett Williamson
El Dorado

Diane Zook
Melbourne

10 November, 2015

In the Matter of: Nomination for Universal Service Administrative Company Board of Directors, CC Docket Nos. 97-21 and 96-45

Dear Chairman Wheeler,

I am pleased to nominate Dr. Miguel (Mike) Hernandez to fill the Board member position for the representative for schools that are eligible to receive discounts pursuant to section 54.501 of the Commission's rules on the Board of Directors of the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC). Dr. Hernandez has worked tirelessly to improve connectivity for Arkansas students, first as a superintendent, and then in his position as Deputy Commissioner for Education. In both of these capacities, he has acted as Arkansas's resident E-rate expert, guiding applicants toward obtaining more than \$50 million annually in E-rate funding.

The Arkansas public school system has 257 districts with nearly a half million students, stretching from the banks of the Mississippi River to the hills and hollows of the Ozark Mountains. These districts serve thousands of low-income students and rural populations. In many of these districts, broadband expansion is challenged by low population density and difficult terrain, making it cost prohibitive to provide adequate connectivity to thousands of students. Because of these obstacles, Arkansans have suffered from some of the nation's worst broadband availability, both at school and at home. In this environment, the E-rate program is often the only way our superintendents can provide their students with adequate Internet connections. My office wholeheartedly supports the E-rate program because it is a critical part of our efforts to provide students with an education that will allow them to compete in the global marketplace of the 21st century. Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated extraordinary acumen at leveraging the E-rate program for the benefit of all Arkansans, and I am confident that he will bring the same skill and diligence to bear as a USAC board member.

When Dr. Hernandez became the Assistant Commissioner of the Arkansas Department of Education in 2014, the quality of school connectivity in Arkansas had reached a crisis point. The state was spending nearly \$280 per megabit, nearly 20 times the national average. Rural school districts had only antiquated copper connections, sometimes providing a mere 7 kbps per student. Dr. Hernandez spearheaded a statewide effort to mobilize superintendents and local communities to better leverage Arkansas's E-rate funding. Under his leadership, a public-private partnership was established to provide every school district in Arkansas with a state-of-the-art fiber optic connection. This first in the nation solution is projected to save millions of dollars, provide every Arkansas student with gigabit connectivity, and has bipartisan backing in the Arkansas legislature. Building upon this plan, Arkansas is now one of a few states to mandate that every school district offer coding classes. I am confident that our state would never have reached this extraordinary milestone without Dr. Hernandez's leadership and knowledge.

Dr. Hernandez's qualifications for the USAC board extend beyond his recent exploits. He began his career as a superintendent in Danville, Arkansas, a rural community of 2,400 at the foothills of the Ouachita Mountains. In Danville, the student population is majority Hispanic, over seventy-five % of students receive free or reduced lunches, and many students lack basic internet access at home. Dr. Hernandez realized that without adequate connectivity, his students would never acquire the skills necessary to succeed and compete in the 21st century. On his own initiative, he worked with the private sector to connect the entire district with fiber optic

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Chairman Wheeler

November 10, 2015

technology, upgrading outdated copper infrastructure. At the Arkansas Department of Education, Dr. Hernandez spearheaded efforts to enable data-driven decision-making through the digitization and analysis of educational data. In particular, he oversaw the implementation of statewide, cloud-based software designed to standardize district-level administrative procedures, as well as shepherding the creation of a database for curriculum and professional development materials. Through these experiences, Dr. Hernandez has acquired a visceral understanding of the transformational possibilities offered by connectivity and how a lack of access exacerbates the digital divide.

The challenge of ensuring that every school and library in America can take advantage of the digital revolution goes far beyond the issue of funding; it is a question of determination and creativity. Monumental tasks of this sort require monumental leadership, and Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated that he is an agent of positive change. I am confident that he will be an exceptional representative for America's superintendents on the USAC board.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,

Sincerely,



Johnny Key

Commissioner of Education



Mark E. Myers

State Chief Technology Officer

Agency Director

Department of Information Systems

USAC Board of Directors

Nomination of Dr. Miguel Hernandez

Letters of Support

17, August, 2015

	District Name
x	Alpena School District
x	Ashdown School District
x	Beebe School District
x	Benton School District
x	Bergman School District
x	Bismarck School District
x	Bryant School District
x	Calico Rock School District
x	Centerpoint School District
x	Charleston School District
x	Clarendon School District
x	Clarksville School District
x	Cleveland County School District
x	Corning School District
x	Cossatot River School District
x	DeQueen School District
x	East Poinsett County School District
x	Fountain Lake School District
x	Gentry School District
x	Glen Rose School District
x	Greenbrier School District
x	Greene County Tech School District
x	Hampton School District
xx	Harrisburg School District
x	Harrison School District
x	Hector School District
x	Horatio Public Schools
x	Jasper School District
x	Jonesboro School District
x	Lakeside School District Lake Village
x	Lincoln Consolidated School District
x	Magnolia School District
x	Manila School District

x	Mayflower School District
x	Maynard School District
x	McGehee School District
x	Melbourne School District
x	Midland School District
x	Mount Ida School District
x	Mountain View School District
x	Mountainburg School District
x	Nemo Vista School District
x	North Little Rock School District
x	Ouachita River School District
x	Ozark School District
x	Pangburn School District
x	Paragould School District
x	Piggott School District
x	Pocahontas School District
x	Poyen School District
x	Prescott School District
x	Pulaski County Special School District
x	Rector School District
x	Riverview School District
x	Rogers School District
x	Sheridan School District
x	South Side Bee Branch School District
x	Spring Hill School District
x	Waldron School District
x	Warren School District
x	West Memphis School District
x	West Side School District/Cleburn County
x	Wynne School District
x	Yellville-Summit School District
	Coops, Charters, & New School Districts
x	Southwest Arkansas Coop
x	KIPP Delta Public Schools
x	Ozark Unlimited Resource Coop
x	Guy Fenter Education Service Coop
x	De Queen-Mena Education Service Coop
x	Hass Hall Academy
x	Northwest Arkansas Education Service Coop
x	Wilbur Mills Education Service Coop
x	Jacksonville North Pulaski School District
x	Responsive Ed

- x SIATech
- x Lisa Academy
- VIPs**
- x Governor David Pryor
- x Southern Regional Education Board (SREB)
- x Arkansas Public Service Commission, Lamar Davis
- x Funds for Learning, John Harrington
- x AREON, Steve Fulkerson
- x Commissioner Johnny Key
- x AAEA Richard Abernathy
- x AREA Bill Abernathy
- x Arkansas State Teacher's Association
- x Cody Decker, Former ADE Asst. Commissioner
- x Eric Saunders, ADE Asst. Commissioner



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Johnny Key
Commissioner

August 11, 2015

**State Board
of Education**

In the Matter of: Nomination for Universal Service Administration Company Board of Directors, CC Docket Nos. 97-21 and 96-45

Toyce Newton
Crossett
Chair

Dear Chairman Wheeler,

Mireya Reith
Fayetteville
Vice Chair

I am pleased to nominate Dr. Miguel (Mike) Hernandez to fill the superintendent representative seat on the Board of Directors of the Universal Service Administrative Company's (USAC). Dr. Hernandez has worked tirelessly to improve connectivity for Arkansas students, first as a superintendent, and then in his position as Deputy Commissioner for Education. In both of these capacities, he has acted as Arkansas's resident E-rate expert, guiding applicants toward a projected \$50 million annually in E-rate funding.

Dr. Jay Barth
Little Rock

Joe Black
Newport

The Arkansas public school system has 257 districts with nearly a half million students, stretching from the banks of the Mississippi River to the hills and hollows of the Ozark Mountains. These districts serve thousands of low-income students and rural populations. In many of these districts, broadband expansion is challenged by low population density and difficult terrain, making it cost prohibitive to provide adequate connectivity to thousands of students. Because of these obstacles, Arkansans have suffered from some of the nation's worst broadband availability, both at school and at home. In this environment, the E-rate program is often the only way our superintendents can provide their students with adequate Internet connections. My office wholeheartedly supports the E-rate program because it is a critical part of our efforts to provide students with an education that will allow them to compete in the global marketplace of the 21st century. Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated extraordinary acumen at leveraging the E-rate program for the benefit of all Arkansans, and I am confident that he will bring the same skill and diligence to bear as a USAC board member.

Susan Chambers
Bella Vista

Charisse Dean
Little Rock

Vicki Saviers
Little Rock

R. Brett Williamson
El Dorado

Diane Zook
Melbourne

When Dr. Hernandez became the Assistant Commissioner of the Arkansas Department of Education in 2014, the quality of school connectivity in Arkansas had reached a crisis point. The state was spending nearly \$280 per megabit, nearly 20 times the national average. Rural school districts had only antiquated copper connections, sometimes providing a mere 7 kbps per student. Dr. Hernandez spearheaded a statewide effort to mobilize superintendents and local communities to better leverage Arkansas's E-rate funding. Under his leadership, a public-private partnership was established to provide every school district in Arkansas with a state-of-the-art fiber optic connection. This first in the nation solution is projected to save millions of dollars, provide every Arkansas student with gigabit connectivity, and has bipartisan backing in the Arkansas legislature. Building upon this plan, Arkansas is now one of a few states to mandate that every school district offer coding classes. I am confident that our state would never have reached this extraordinary milestone without Dr. Hernandez's leadership and knowledge.

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Dr. Hernandez's qualifications for the USAC board extend beyond his recent exploits. He began his career as a superintendent in Danville, Arkansas, a rural community of 2,400 at the foothills of the Ouachita Mountains. In Danville, the student population is majority Hispanic, over seventy-five % of students receive free or reduced lunches, and many students lack basic Internet access at home. Dr. Hernandez realized that without adequate connectivity, his students would never acquire the skills necessary to succeed and compete in the 21st century. On his own initiative, he worked with the private sector to connect the entire district with fiber optic technology, upgrading outdated copper infrastructure. At the Arkansas Department of Education, Dr.

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Page 2

Chairman Wheeler

August 11, 2015

Hernandez spearheaded efforts to enable data-driven decision-making through the digitization and analysis of educational data. In particular, he oversaw the implementation of statewide, cloud-based software designed to standardize district-level administrative procedures, as well as shepherding the creation of a database for curriculum and professional development materials. Through these experiences, Dr. Hernandez has acquired a visceral understanding of the transformational possibilities offered by connectivity and how a lack of access exacerbates the digital divide.

The challenge of ensuring that every school and library in America can take advantage of the digital revolution goes far beyond the issue of funding; it is a question of determination and creativity. Monumental tasks of this sort require monumental leadership, and Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated that he is an agent of positive change. I am confident that he will be an exceptional representative for America's superintendents on the USAC board.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Johnny Key". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Johnny Key

Commissioner of Education

PROFESSIONAL BIOGRAPHY FOR DR. MIGUEL (MIKE) HERNANDEZ

Dr. Miguel Hernandez is Superintendent for the Hot Springs School District, where he is responsible for the education and well-being of 3,600 students. In this position, he manages the day-to-day affairs of the entire district, with a particular focus on coordinating technological training and improving the district's broadband infrastructure. He is actively engaged in the local community as a member of the local Rotary and Lion's Club.

Prior to joining the Hot Spring School District, Dr. Hernandez served for two years at the Arkansas Department of Education in a variety of positions. Among other positions, he served as the Deputy Commissioner for Education, where he created and implemented a state-wide strategy to provide every school district with fiber optic connectivity. During this upgrade, Dr. Hernandez was directly responsible for navigating the disparate interests of multiple stakeholders, including state agencies, school districts, and private service providers. Furthermore, Dr. Hernandez was the Department's preeminent expert on E-rate, providing invaluable advice and guidance to applicants from around the state. He also organized several data collection initiatives, ranging from school finance and online student transcripts, to the creation of the state's longitudinal data system.

Before joining the Department of Education, Dr. Hernandez also served as Superintendent of the Danville School District, where he upgraded the district's broadband connection from outdated copper to fiber optics. He began his career as a Principal of the Western Yell County High School, where he created a program that enabled every student to take home a laptop. Dr. Hernandez received his B.S. from the University of New Orleans, both of his M.A.s from the University of Central Arkansas, and his doctorate from Harding University.

MIGUEL C HERNANDEZ III

451 Lakeland Drive Apt H6, Hot Springs, AR 71901

Home: (501) 520-7743

mch8184@hotmail.com

SUMMARY

Dynamic education administrator with expertise in finance and technology

CORE QUALIFICATIONS

- Organizational Management
- Leadership
- Communication
- Strategic Planning
- Budget Analysis and Management
- Procurement
- Data Analysis
- Technology Integration

ACHIEVEMENTS

Finance

- Redesigned the Arkansas Department of Education's Finance Division, resulting in a drastic increase of service to school districts, an efficient process for evaluating sub-grantees of state and federal grants, and a streamlined system to review and track all contracts and agreements.

E-rate

- As a superintendent, used E-rate to upgrade all copper lines to fiber and upgrade the wireless systems throughout the district.
- Working with other state agencies, legislators, and telecommunications companies, completed a procurement process to upgrade the Arkansas Public School Computer Network, resulting in increased broadband for schools and a more efficient use of E-rate funds.

Technology

- Provided leadership in several data initiatives at ADE: *eSchool*, *eFinance*, *StudentGPS*, and the state-wide longitudinal data system.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

HOT SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT

Hot Springs, AR

Superintendent

07/2015 to 08/2015

- Manage a 42 million dollar annual budget
- Optimize personnel and material resources throughout the district
- Coordinate school technology plan for infrastructure and training
- Collaborate with board, staff, and the community to conceptualize and implement a sound mission and vision
- Effectively leverage E-rate dollars to improve the district's broadband infrastructure

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Little Rock, AR

Deputy Commissioner

07/2014 to 07/2015

- Research and analyze educational trends, general practices, and legislation on the state and federal levels
- Manage a 3.2 billion dollar annual budget
- Supervise a staff of over 400
- Collaborate with department directors daily
- As part of a small team, create and implement the strategy to upgrade the state's broadband network from 5kbs/student to 200kbs/student
- Chair of Charter Authorizing Panel

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Little Rock, AR

Assistant Commissioner

07/2013 to 07/2014

- Oversee the state's student and finance management software and infrastructure for K-12 education
- Process expert knowledge of all sources of federal and state funding programs, such as E-rate, Title I, and Child Nutrition funding

- After state intervention, collaborate with school districts in financial crisis to create a strategy to enable them to re-gain control of leadership
- Successfully implement a state-wide online assessment by collaborating with a team to analyze and troubleshoot state and local networks and end-user devices
- Member of Charter Authorizing Panel

DANVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Danville, AR

Superintendent

07/2011 to 07/2013

- Manage staff and resources in a district of 900 students
- Develop and implement a system of continuous improvement
- Oversee and administer the use of property, facilities, and funds in the interest of teachers and students
- Administer the annual school budget of 8 million dollars
- Upgrade the district's wireless networks and fiber infrastructure in order to implement a 1 to 1 student/device ratio.

WESTERN YELL COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

Havana, AR

Principal/Athletic Director

07/2010 to 07/2011

- Design and implement a school-wide program that enables each student to take home a laptop computer provide by the school
- Manage all aspects of all athletic programs, including budget
- Manage and produce required reports for school's state and federal funds
- Oversee all administrative activities
- Evaluate staff and curriculum

----- EDUCATION AND TRAINING -----

TEACH GREATER NEW ORLEANS LEVEL 1 CERTIFICATE MATHEMATICS/SCIENCE/PE 7-12 June 2005
University of New Orleans, AR

DOCTORAL DEGREE: EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

May 2015

Harding University, Searcy, AR

Educational Leadership District Level Coursework

M.A.: MATHEMATICS EDUCATION

Aug 2005

University of Central Arkansas, Conway, AR

Mathematics Education

M.A: EDUCATION LEADERSHIP

5/08

University of Central Arkansas, Conway, AR

Education Leadership

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE: BIOLOGY

12/2001

University of New Orleans

Biology

----- CERTIFICATIONS -----

District Level License

Life/Earth Science 6-12

Building Level License P-8

Louisiana Physical Education P-12

Building Level License 7-12 Mathematics 7-12

----- COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT -----

Lion's Club

Rotary Club

United Way

----- AFFILIATIONS -----

Arkansas Association of Education Administrators

Arkansas Association of School Administrators

Arkansas School Business Officials

----- SKILLS -----

Accounting/Budget/Finance

Administration/Leadership/Management

Technical/Broadband/Networks

David Pryor

August 13, 2015

In the Matter of: Nomination for Universal Service Administration Company Board of Directors, CC Docket Nos. 97-21 and 96-45

Dear Chairman Wheeler,

I write to express my strong support for the nomination of Dr. Miguel Hernandez to the Universal Service Administrative Company's (USAC) Board of Directors. I was extremely pleased to learn that an administrator of Dr. Hernandez's caliber has been nominated, and I welcome the opportunity to submit this letter of support.

As a former Governor, United States Senator and Board Member of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, I am keenly aware of Dr. Hernandez's exceptional work in our state. The State of Arkansas has 257 school districts with nearly a half million students, stretching from the banks of the Mississippi River to the hills and hollows of the Ozark Mountains. In many of these districts, broadband expansion is challenged by low population density and difficult terrain, making it cost prohibitive to provide adequate connectivity to thousands of students. Because of these obstacles, Arkansans have suffered from some of the nation's worst broadband availability, both at school and at home. In this environment, the E-rate program is often the only way our superintendents can provide their students with adequate Internet connections. I wholeheartedly support the E-rate program because it is the cornerstone of our efforts to provide students with an education that will allow them to compete in the global marketplace of the 21st century. Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated extraordinary acumen at leveraging the E-rate program for the benefit of all Arkansans, and I am confident that he will bring the same skill and diligence to bear as a USAC board member.

When Dr. Hernandez became the Assistant Commissioner of the Arkansas Department of Education in 2014, the quality of school connectivity in Arkansas had reached a crisis point. The state was spending nearly \$280 per megabit, nearly 20 times the national average. Rural school districts had only antiquated copper connections, sometimes providing a mere 7 kbps per student. Dr. Hernandez spearheaded a statewide effort to mobilize superintendents and local communities to better leverage Arkansas's E-rate funding. Under his leadership, a public-private partnership was established to provide every school district in Arkansas with a state-of-the-art fiber optic connection. This first in the nation solution is projected to save millions of dollars, provide every Arkansas student with gigabit connectivity, and has bipartisan backing in the Arkansas legislature. Building upon this plan, Arkansas is one of a few states to mandate that every school district offer coding classes. I am confident that our state would never have reached this extraordinary milestone without Dr. Hernandez's leadership and knowledge.

201 S. Izard St., Little Rock, AR 72201
(501) 777-3050

Dr. Hernandez's qualifications for the USAC board extend beyond his recent exploits. He began his career as a superintendent in Danville, Arkansas, a rural community of 2,400 at the foothills of the Ouachita Mountains. In Danville, the student population is majority Hispanic, over seventy-five % of students receive free or reduced lunches, and many students lack basic internet access at home. Dr. Hernandez realized that without adequate connectivity, his students would never acquire the skills necessary to succeed and compete in the 21st century. On his own initiative, he worked with the private sector to connect the entire district with fiber optic technology, upgrading outdated copper infrastructure. At the Arkansas Department of Education, Dr. Hernandez spearheaded efforts to enable data-driven decision-making through the digitization and analysis of educational data. In particular, he oversaw the implementation of statewide, cloud-based software designed to standardize district-level administrative procedures, as well as shepherding the creation of a database for curriculum and professional development materials. Through these experiences, Dr. Hernandez has acquired a visceral understanding of the transformational possibilities offered by connectivity and how a lack of access exacerbates the digital divide.

The challenge of ensuring that every school and library in America can take advantage of the digital revolution goes far beyond the issue of funding; it is a question of determination and creativity. Monumental tasks of this sort require monumental leadership, and Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated that he is an agent of positive change. I am confident that he will be an exceptional representative for America's superintendents on the USAC board.

I respectfully request your approval of Dr. Hernandez's nomination to the USAC board of directors as a representative of schools eligible to receive E-rate.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Pryor", followed by a period.

David Pryor
U.S. Senator (ret.)

Ted J. Thomas
Chairman
(501) 682-5806

Elana C. Wills
Commissioner
(501) 682-5809

Lamar B. Davis
Commissioner
(501) 682-5809

**ARKANSAS
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**
1000 Center Street
P.O. Box 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72203-0400
<http://www.Arkansas.gov/psc>



August 14, 2015

Re: *In the Matter of: Nomination for Universal Service Administration Company Board of Directors, CC
Docket Nos. 97-21 and 96-45*

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

I am writing to express my strong support for the nomination of Dr. Miguel (Mike) Hernandez to the Universal Service Administrative Company's (USAC) Board of Directors. Dr. Hernandez has worked tirelessly to improve connectivity for Arkansas students, first as a superintendent, and then in his position as Deputy Commissioner for Education. In both of these capacities, he has acted as Arkansas's resident E-rate expert, guiding applicants toward a projected \$50 million annually in E-rate funding.

In Arkansas, there are thirty-two incumbent local exchange carriers and ninety-eight competitive local exchange carriers serving approximately 762,686 access lines throughout Arkansas with service territories stretching from the banks of the Mississippi River to the hills and hollows of the Ozark Mountains. The incumbent local exchange carriers are all designated as eligible telecommunications carriers. Additionally, there are forty competitive local exchange carriers and wireless providers that are designated as eligible telecommunications carriers. These telecommunications companies serve thousands of low-income students and rural populations. In many of these communities, broadband expansion is challenged by low population density and difficult terrain, making it cost prohibitive to provide adequate connectivity to thousands of students. Because of these obstacles, Arkansas continues to lag behind other states in broadband availability, both at school and at home. In this environment, the E-rate program provides an essential and very useful tool for the state's schools to provide students with adequate Internet connections. I wholeheartedly support the E-rate program, because it is a critical part of Arkansas' efforts to provide students with an education that will allow them to compete in the global marketplace of the 21st century. Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated extraordinary acumen at leveraging the E-rate program for the benefit of all Arkansans, and I am confident that he will bring the same skill and diligence to bear as a USAC board member.

When Dr. Hernandez became the Assistant Commissioner of the Arkansas Department of Education in 2014, the quality of school connectivity in Arkansas had reached a crisis point. The state was spending nearly \$280 per megabit, nearly 20 times the national average. A number of rural school districts had only antiquated copper connections, sometimes providing a mere 7 kbps per student. Dr. Hernandez spearheaded a statewide effort to mobilize superintendents and local communities to better leverage Arkansas's E-rate funding. Under his leadership, Arkansas established a public-private partnership to provide every school district in Arkansas with a state-of-the-art fiber optic connection. This first in the nation solution is projected to save millions of

dollars, provide every Arkansas student with gigabit connectivity, and has bipartisan backing in the Arkansas legislature. Building upon this plan, Arkansas is now one of a few states to mandate that every school district offer coding classes. I am confident that our state would never have reached this extraordinary milestone without Dr. Hernandez's leadership and knowledge.

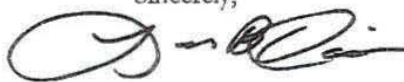
Dr. Hernandez's qualifications for the USAC board extend beyond his recent achievements. He began his career as a superintendent in Danville, Arkansas, a rural community of 2,400 at the foothills of the Ouachita Mountains. In Danville, the student population is majority Hispanic, over seventy-five percent of students receive free or reduced lunches, and many students lack basic internet access at home. Dr. Hernandez realized that without adequate connectivity, his students would never acquire the skills necessary to succeed and compete in the 21st century. On his own initiative, he worked with the private sector to connect the entire district with fiber optic technology, upgrading outdated copper infrastructure. At the Arkansas Department of Education, Dr. Hernandez realized that without adequate connectivity, his students would never acquire the skills necessary to succeed and compete in the 21st century. On his own initiative, he worked with the private sector to connect the entire district with fiber optic technology, upgrading outdated copper infrastructure. At the Arkansas Department of Education, Dr. Hernandez spearheaded efforts to enable data-driven decision-making through the digitization and analysis of educational data. In particular, he oversaw the implementation of statewide, cloud-based software designed to standardize district-level administrative procedures, as well as shepherding the creation of a database for curriculum and professional development materials. Through these experiences, Dr. Hernandez has acquired a visceral understanding of the transformational possibilities offered by connectivity and how a lack of access exacerbates the digital divide.

The Internet offers hope that no matter where a person lives, whether in Manhattan or the Ozarks, they have the opportunity to connect with others and engage in the greater American civic community. Unfortunately, today, for millions who live in rural America, basic connectivity is often not readily accessible. As rural electrification was in the past century, expanding connectivity to the far-flung corners of our nation is one of the challenges of our age. Meeting this challenge requires far more than funding; it is a question of determination and creativity. Monumental tasks of this sort require monumental leadership, and Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated the vision and skill necessary to achieve such a mission. I am confident that he will be an exceptional representative for America's superintendents on the USAC board.

I respectfully request your careful review and approval of Dr. Hernandez's nomination to the USAC board of directors as a representative of schools eligible to receive E-rate.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lamar B. Davis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "L" and "B".

Lamar B. Davis



August 12, 2015

RE: Nomination for Universal Service Administration Company Board of Directors, CC Docket
Nos. 97-21 and 96-45

Dear Chairman Wheeler,

On behalf of the Arkansas Research and Education Optical Network (ARE-ON), I write to express our strong support for the nomination of Dr. Miguel (Michael) Hernandez to the Universal Service Administrative Company's (USAC) Board of Directors. I was extremely pleased to learn that an administrator of Dr. Hernandez's caliber has been nominated and I welcome the opportunity to submit this letter of support.

As the research and higher education network for Arkansas, our mission is to support and enhance education, research, telemedicine, and economic development. We understand the challenges that rural areas face in terms of broadband connectivity and the benefits that the E-rate program provides for ensuring quality broadband service to schools. The E-rate program is truly an equalizer for access to technology and opportunities that will allow Arkansas students to compete in the global marketplace.

While you will be benefiting from Dr. Hernandez's demonstrated leadership in the E-rate program, as evident with his work as the Assistant Commissioner of the Arkansas Department of Education, you will also have the added benefit of a board member who comes from a state that is a leader in telehealth because of the Health Care Connect Fund. Arkansas, with the University of Arkansas Medical Sciences (UAMS) as the consortium leader, was an active participant in the Rural Healthcare Connect Fund Pilot Program. This has resulted in the connection of over 500 rural healthcare locations around the state. Having a member of your board with both the interest of K-12 and the rural healthcare community makes Dr. Hernandez a unique and effective choice.

I, on the behalf of the Arkansas Research and Education Optical Network, respectfully request your approval of Dr. Hernandez's nomination to the USAC board of directors as a representative of schools eligible to receive E-rate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steve Fulkerson", is written over a horizontal line.

Steven Fulkerson
Executive Director

155 S. Razorback Road, Fayetteville, AR 72701
Phone: 479-575-3901 * Fax: 479-575-4753 * www.aron.net



August 12, 2015

In the Matter of: Nomination for Universal Service Administration Company Board of Directors, CC Docket Nos. 97-21 and 96-45

Dear Chairman Wheeler,

On behalf of the Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators (AAEA), I write to express our strong support for the nomination of Dr. Michael Hernandez to the Universal Service Administrative Company's (USAC) Board of Directors. I was extremely pleased to learn that an administrator of Dr. Hernandez's caliber has been nominated and I welcome the opportunity to submit this letter of support.

The AAEA represents superintendents who administer 232 districts with nearly 470,000 students, stretching from the banks of the Mississippi River to the hills and hollows of the Ozark Mountains. These districts serve thousands of low-income students and rural populations. In many of these districts, broadband expansion is challenged by low population density and difficult terrain, making it cost prohibitive to provide adequate connectivity to thousands of students. Because of these obstacles, Arkansans have suffered from some of the nation's worst broadband availability, both at school and at home. In this environment, the E-rate program is often the only way our superintendents can provide their students with adequate Internet connections. The AAEA wholeheartedly supports the E-rate program because it is the cornerstone of our efforts to provide students with an education that will allow them to compete in the global marketplace of the 21st century. Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated extraordinary acumen at leveraging the E-rate program for the benefit of all Arkansans, and I am confident that he will bring the same skill and diligence to bear as a USAC board member.

When Dr. Hernandez became the Assistant Commissioner of the Arkansas Department of Education in 2014, the quality of school connectivity in Arkansas had reached a crisis point. The state was spending nearly \$280 per megabit, nearly 20 times the national average. Rural school districts had only antiquated copper connections, sometimes providing a mere 7 kbps per student. Dr. Hernandez spearheaded a statewide effort to mobilize superintendents and local communities to better leverage Arkansas's E-rate funding. Under his leadership, a public-private partnership was established to provide every school district in Arkansas with a state-of-the-art fiber optic connection. This first in the nation solution is projected to save millions of dollars, provide every Arkansas student with gigabit connectivity, and has bipartisan backing in the Arkansas legislature. Building upon this plan, Arkansas is now one of few states to mandate that every school district offer coding classes. I am confident that our state would never have reached this extraordinary milestone without Dr. Hernandez's leadership and knowledge.

Dr. Hernandez's qualifications for the USAC board extend beyond his recent exploits. He began his career as a superintendent in Danville, Arkansas, a rural community of 2,400 at the foothills of the Ouachita Mountains. In Danville, the student population is majority Hispanic, over seventy-five % of students receive free or reduced lunches, and many students lack basic internet access at home. Dr. Hernandez realized that

without adequate connectivity, his students would never acquire the skills necessary to succeed and compete in the 21st century. On his own initiative, he worked with the private sector to connect the entire district with fiber optic technology, upgrading outdated copper infrastructure. At the Arkansas Department of Education, Dr. Hernandez spearheaded efforts to enable data-driven decision-making through the digitization and analysis of educational data. In particular, he oversaw the implementation of statewide, cloud-based software designed to standardize district-level administrative procedures, as well as shepherding the creation of a database for curriculum and professional development materials. Through these experiences, Dr. Hernandez has acquired a visceral understanding of the transformational possibilities offered by connectivity and how a lack of access exacerbates the digital divide.

The Internet offers hope that no matter where a person lives, whether in Manhattan or the Ozarks, they have the opportunity to connect with others and engage in the greater American civic community. But today, for millions who live in rural American, basic connectivity is barely accessible. As rural electrification was in the past century, expanding connectivity to the far-flung corners of our nation is one of the challenges of our age. Meeting this challenge requires far more than funding; it is a question of determination and creativity. Monumental tasks of this sort require monumental leadership, and Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated the vision and skill necessary to achieve such a mission. I am confident that he will be an exceptional representative for America's superintendents on the USAC board.

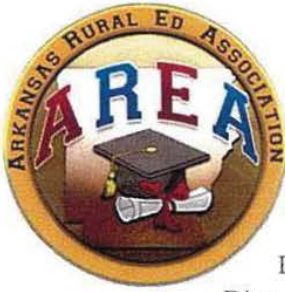
I, on the behalf of the AAEA, respectfully request your approval of Dr. Hernandez's nomination to the USAC board of directors as a representative of schools eligible to receive E-rate.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Richard Abernathy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" and last name "Abernathy" clearly legible.

Dr. Richard Abernathy
AAEA Executive Director



Arkansas Rural Ed Association

1309 Texas Street

Mena, AR 71953

479-234-2733

In the Matter of: Nomination for Universal Service Administration Company Board of Directors, CC Docket Nos. 97-21 and 96-45

Dear Chairman Wheeler,

On behalf of the Arkansas Rural Education Association (AREA), I write to express our strong support for the nomination of Dr. Michael Hernandez to the Universal Service Administrative Company's (USAC) Board of Directors. I was extremely pleased to learn that an administrator of Dr. Hernandez's caliber has been nominated and I welcome the opportunity to submit this letter of support.

The AREA represents superintendents who administer more than 150 districts with nearly 200,000 students, stretching from the banks of the Mississippi River to the hills and hollows of the Ozark Mountains. These districts serve thousands of low-income students and rural populations. In many of these districts, broadband expansion is challenged by low population density and difficult terrain, making it cost prohibitive to provide adequate connectivity to thousands of students. Because of these obstacles, Arkansans have suffered from some of the nation's worst broadband availability, both at school and at home. In this environment, the E-rate program is often the only way our superintendents can provide their students with adequate Internet connections. The AREA wholeheartedly supports the E-rate program because it is the cornerstone of our efforts to provide students with an education that will allow them to compete in the global marketplace of the 21st century. Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated extraordinary acumen at leveraging the E-rate program for the benefit of all Arkansans, and I am confident that he will bring the same skill and diligence to bear as a USAC board member.

When Dr. Hernandez became the Assistant Commissioner of the Arkansas Department of Education in 2014, the quality of school connectivity in Arkansas had reached a crisis point. The state was spending nearly \$280 per megabit, nearly 20 times the national average. Rural school districts had only antiquated copper connections, sometimes providing a mere 7 kbps per student. Dr. Hernandez spearheaded a statewide effort to mobilize superintendents and local communities to better leverage Arkansas's E-rate funding. Under his leadership, a public-private partnership was established to provide every school district in Arkansas with a state-of-the-art fiber optic connection. This first in the nation solution is projected to save millions of dollars, provide every Arkansas student with gigabit connectivity, and has bipartisan backing in the Arkansas legislature. Building upon this plan, Arkansas is now one of few states to mandate that every school district offer coding classes. I am confident that our state would never have reached this extraordinary milestone without Dr. Hernandez's leadership and knowledge.

Dr. Hernandez's qualifications for the USAC board extend beyond his recent exploits. He began his career as a superintendent in Danville, Arkansas, a rural community of 2,400 at the foothills of the Ouachita Mountains. In Danville, the student population is majority Hispanic, over seventy-five % of students receive free or reduced lunches, and many students lack basic internet access at home. Dr. Hernandez realized that without adequate connectivity, his students would never acquire the skills necessary to succeed and compete in the 21st century. On his own initiative, he worked with the private sector to connect entire districts with fiber optic technology, upgrading outdated copper infrastructure. At the Arkansas Department of Education, Dr. Hernandez spearheaded efforts to enable data-driven decision-making through the digitization and

analysis of educational data. In particular, he oversaw the implementation of statewide, cloud-based software designed to standardize district-level administrative procedures, as well as shepherding the creation of a database for curriculum and professional development materials. Through these experiences, Dr. Hernandez has acquired a visceral understanding of the transformational possibilities offered by connectivity and how a lack of access exacerbates the digital divide.

The Internet offers hope that no matter where a person lives, whether in Manhattan or the Ozarks, they have the opportunity to connect with others and engage in the greater American civic community. But today, for millions who live in rural America, basic connectivity is barely accessible. As rural electrification was in the past century, expanding connectivity to the far-flung corners of our nation is one of the challenges of our age. Meeting this challenge requires far more than funding; it is a question of determination and creativity. Monumental tasks of this sort require monumental leadership, and Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated the vision and skill necessary to achieve such a mission. I am confident that he will be an exceptional representative for America's superintendents on the USAC board.

I, on the behalf of the AREA, respectfully request your approval of Dr. Hernandez's nomination to the USAC board of directors as a representative of schools eligible to receive E-rate.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bill Abernathy". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with a long, sweeping tail on the last name.

Executive Director



In the Matter of: Nomination for Universal Service Administration Company Board of Directors, CC Docket Nos. 97-21 and 96-45

August 10, 2015

Dear Chairman Wheeler,

On behalf of the Arkansas State Teachers Association (ASTA), I write to express our strong support for the nomination of Dr. Michael Hernandez to the Universal Service Administrative Company's (USAC) Board of Directors. I was extremely pleased to learn that an administrator of Dr. Hernandez's caliber has been nominated and I welcome the opportunity to submit this letter of support.

The ASTA represents thousands of teachers and other education professionals all over the state of Arkansas, stretching from the banks of the Mississippi River to the hills and hollows of the Ozark Mountains. Our members serve in traditional public schools as well as charter public schools. These teachers serve thousands of low-income students and rural populations. In many of their districts, broadband expansion is challenged by low population density and difficult terrain, making it cost prohibitive to provide adequate connectivity to thousands of students. Because of these obstacles, Arkansans have suffered from some of the nation's worst broadband availability, both at school and at home. In this environment, the E-rate program is often the only way our teachers can provide their students with adequate Internet connections. ASTA is member-driven and in recent surveys, members have expressed that technology challenges rank in the top 3 frustrations impacting their ability to effectively serve Arkansas children. ASTA wholeheartedly supports the E-rate program because it is the cornerstone of our efforts to provide students with an education that will allow them to compete in the global marketplace of the 21st century. Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated extraordinary acumen at leveraging the E-rate program for the benefit of all Arkansans, and I am confident that he will bring the same skill and diligence to bear as a USAC board member.

I have made it a personal and professional mission to better understand this most critical issue in order to better serve our members. When Dr. Hernandez became the Assistant Commissioner of the Arkansas Department of Education in 2014, the quality of school connectivity in Arkansas had reached a crisis point. The state was spending nearly \$280 per megabit, nearly 20 times the national average. Rural school districts had only antiquated copper connections, sometimes providing a mere 7 kbps per student. Dr. Hernandez spearheaded a statewide effort to mobilize superintendents and local communities to better leverage Arkansas's E-rate funding. Under his leadership, a public-private partnership was established to provide every school district in Arkansas with a state-of-the-art fiber optic connection. This first in the nation solution is projected to save millions of dollars, provide every Arkansas student with gigabit connectivity, and has bipartisan backing in the Arkansas legislature. Building upon this plan, Arkansas is now one of a few states to mandate that every school district offer coding classes. I am confident that our state would never have reached this extraordinary milestone without Dr. Hernandez's leadership and knowledge.

Dr. Hernandez's qualifications for the USAC board extend beyond his recent achievements. He is one of the most well respected education professionals in our state. One critical qualification for positions like this is the ability to understand issues through various lenses. Dr. Hernandez's experience working with rural and suburban districts as well as understanding of the needs facing our most struggling students and communities make him an outstanding candidate for the USAC Board. He began his career as a superintendent in Danville, Arkansas, a rural community of 2,400 at the foothills of the Ouachita Mountains. In Danville, the student population is majority Hispanic, over seventy-five % of students receive free or reduced lunches, and many students lack basic internet access at home. Dr. Hernandez realized that without adequate connectivity, his students would never acquire the skills necessary to succeed and compete in the 21st century. On his own initiative, he worked with the private sector to connect entire districts with fiber optic technology, upgrading outdated copper infrastructure. At the Arkansas Department of Education, Dr. Hernandez spearheaded efforts to enable data-driven decision-making through the digitization and analysis of educational data. In particular, he oversaw the implementation of statewide, cloud-based software designed to standardize district-level administrative procedures, as well as shepherding the creation of a database for curriculum and professional development materials. Through these experiences, Dr. Hernandez has acquired a visceral understanding of the transformational possibilities offered by connectivity and how a lack of access exacerbates the digital divide.

The Internet offers hope that no matter where a person lives, whether in Manhattan or the Ozarks, they have the opportunity to connect with others and engage in the greater American civic community. But today, for millions who live in rural American, basic connectivity is barely accessible. As rural electrification was in the past century, expanding connectivity to the far-flung corners of our nation is one of the challenges of our age. Meeting this challenge requires far more than funding; it is a question of determination and creativity. Monumental tasks of this sort require monumental leadership, and Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated the vision and skill necessary to achieve such a mission. I am confident that he will be an exceptional representative for America's superintendents on the USAC board.

I, on the behalf of the Arkansas State Teachers Association, respectfully request your approval of Dr. Hernandez's nomination to the USAC board of directors as a representative of schools eligible to receive E-rate.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,

Sincerely,



Michele Ballentine-Linch, PhD
Executive Director
Arkansas State Teachers Association
6301 Park Plaza Drive, Suite 1
Little Rock, AR 72205
Tel: 877-742-ASTA (2782)
Cell: 501-766-3931
Fax: 501-400-8276



Southern Regional Education Board
592 10th St. N.W.
Atlanta, GA 30318
Phone: (404) 875-9211
Fax: (404) 872-1477
sreb.org

August 13, 2015

In the Matter of: Nomination for Universal Service Administration Company Board of Directors,
CC Docket Nos. 97-21 and 96-45

Dear Chairman Wheeler,

On behalf of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), I write to express our strong support for the nomination of Dr. Michael Hernandez to the Universal Service Administrative Company's (USAC) board of directors. I was extremely pleased to learn that a person of Dr. Hernandez's caliber has been nominated, and I welcome the opportunity to submit this letter of support.

SREB represents 16 southern states including Delaware and Maryland. In many SREB states, broadband expansion is challenged by low population density and difficult terrain, making it cost prohibitive to provide adequate connectivity to thousands of students. These many rural areas suffer from some of the nation's worst broadband availability, both at school and at home.

In this environment, the E-rate program is often the only way many rural superintendents can provide their students with adequate Internet connections. Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated extraordinary acumen at leveraging the E-rate program for the benefit to support services in other SREB states, and in rural areas in Arkansas, and I am confident that he will bring the same skill and diligence to bear.

SREB is very much aware Dr. Hernandez spearheaded a statewide effort in Arkansas to mobilize superintendents and local communities to better leverage Arkansas's E-rate funding. Under his leadership, a public-private partnership was established to provide every school district in Arkansas with a state-of-the-art fiber optic connection. This first-in-the nation solution is projected to save millions of dollars, provide every Arkansas student with gigabit connectivity, and has bipartisan backing in the Arkansas legislature. Building upon this plan, Arkansas is now one of a few states to mandate that every school district offers coding classes. I am confident that Arkansas would never have reached this extraordinary milestone without Dr. Hernandez's leadership and knowledge.

Dr. Hernandez's qualifications for the USAC board extend beyond his recent achievements. In my work with the Arkansas State Department of Education, we always found him to be approachable and more than willing to address problems and assure that teachers in Arkansas received literacy and math training.

Dr. Hernandez spearheaded efforts to enable data-driven decision-making through the digitization and analysis of educational data. In particular, he oversaw the implementation of

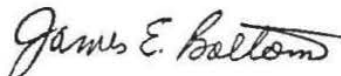
statewide, cloud-based software designed to standardize district-level administrative procedures and shepherd the creation of a database for curriculum and professional development materials.

The Internet offers hope that no matter where a person lives, whether in Atlanta or in remote rural areas across the South, teachers and students have the opportunity to connect with others and engage in an ongoing learning community. But today, for millions who live in rural America, basic connectivity is barely accessible. As rural electrification was in the past century, expanding connectivity to the far-flung corners of our nation is one of the challenges of our age. Meeting this challenge requires far more than funding. It is a question of determination and creativity. Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated the vision and skill necessary to achieve such a mission. I am confident that he will be an exceptional representative for America's superintendents on the USAC board.

I, on the behalf of 16 southern states, respectfully request your approval of Dr. Hernandez's nomination to the USAC board of directors as a representative of schools eligible to receive E-rate.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gene E. Bottoms".

Gene Bottoms
Senior Vice President, SREB

YOUR E-RATE GUIDES

Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington DC 20554

In the Matter of

Nomination for Universal Service Administrative
Company Board of Directors}
}
}
}

CC Docket Nos.97-21 and 96-45

NOMINATION OF DR. MIGUEL C. HERNANDEZ FOR THE USAC BOARD

I am writing in support of Dr. Miguel C. Hernandez to serve as a school representative on the USAC Board. Superintendent Hernandez is a successful K-12 school administrator who has also led staff and managed initiatives for the Arkansas Department of Education.

Dr. Hernandez is an experienced educator who understands the needs of students and teachers. He has walked in the trenches and knows firsthand the opportunities – and the challenges – that exist within a school building. He has worked with students, teachers, parents, school boards, and the community as a whole to deliver positive results for the students that he serves. Furthermore, he has seen up-close the promise of technology and broadband Internet access in schools; and, he knows what is required to make those promises a reality – including the E-rate paperwork necessary to get those resources in place.

This perspective alone would make Superintendent Hernandez a good candidate for the Board. However, what makes him an exceptional candidate is the fact that his experience extends past the school district all the way to the Arkansas Department of Education. Superintendent Hernandez is experienced in leading and managing a large staff at an agency-level. He knows how challenging it can be to serve, to support, and to hold accountable diverse groups of schools while answering directly to the public. While at the Department, he was instrumental in creating and implementing improved systems for K-12 finance across the state. He also helped develop and put into action a plan to increase broadband connectivity to all Arkansas schools. He has in-depth knowledge and experience of accounting, technology, and the E-rate program.

Dr. Hernandez is an ideal candidate to serve on the USAC Board as a school representative. He would provide K-12 education acumen along with distinct insights from leading and managing large programs for the State of Arkansas. His achievements in the areas of finance, technology and E-rate, along with his training in educational leadership, will provide unique value to the Board. For these reasons, I support his nomination and strongly encourage the FCC to appoint Dr. Miguel C. Hernandez to the USAC Board.

Sincerely,


John D. Harrington
Chief Executive Officer

August 13, 2015



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Johnny Key
Commissioner

In the Matter of: Nomination for Universal Service Administration Company Board of Directors, CC Docket Nos. 97-21 and 96-45

**State Board
of Education**

Dear Chairman Wheeler,

Toyce Newton
*Crossett
Chair*

On behalf of the Research and Technology Division at the Arkansas Department of Education, I write to express our strong support for the nomination of Dr. Michael Hernandez to the Universal Service Administrative Company's (USAC) Board of Directors. I was extremely pleased to learn that an administrator of Dr. Hernandez's caliber has been nominated and I welcome the opportunity to submit this letter of support.

Mireya Reith
*Fayetteville
Vice Chair*

Dr. Jay Barth
Little Rock

The Research and Technology Division oversees the data and transfer of data from school districts throughout the state. Additionally, we cooperate to provide internet access for all the school districts within the state. In many of Arkansas districts, broadband expansion is challenged by low population density and difficult terrain, making it cost prohibitive to provide adequate connectivity to thousands of students. Because of these obstacles, Arkansans have suffered from some of the nation's worst broadband availability, both at school and at home. In this environment, the E-rate program is often the only way our superintendents can provide their students with adequate Internet connections. The Research and Technology Division wholeheartedly supports the E-rate program because it is the cornerstone of our efforts to provide students with an education that will allow them to compete in the global marketplace of the 21st century. Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated extraordinary acumen at leveraging the E-rate program for the benefit of all Arkansans, and I am confident that he will bring the same skill and diligence to bear as a USAC board member.

Joe Black
Newport

Susan Chambers
Bella Vista

Charisse Dean
Little Rock

Vicki Saviers
Little Rock

R. Brett Williamson
El Dorado

Diane Zook
Melbourne

When Dr. Hernandez became the Assistant Commissioner of the Arkansas Department of Education in 2014, the quality of school connectivity in Arkansas had reached a crisis point. The state was spending nearly \$280 per megabit, nearly 20 times the national average. Rural school districts had only antiquated copper connections, sometimes providing a mere 7 kbps per student. Dr. Hernandez help to spearhead a statewide effort to mobilize superintendents and local communities to better leverage Arkansas's E-rate funding. Under his leadership, a public-private partnership was established to provide every school district in Arkansas with a state-of-the-art fiber optic connection. This first in the nation solution is projected to save millions of dollars, provide every Arkansas student with gigabit connectivity, and has bipartisan backing in the Arkansas legislature. Building upon this plan, Arkansas is now one of a few states to mandate that every school district offer coding classes. I am confident that our state would never have reached this extraordinary milestone without Dr. Hernandez's leadership and knowledge.

Four Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR
72201-1019
(501) 682-4475
ArkansasEd.gov

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Employer*



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Johnny Key
Commissioner

**State Board
of Education**

Toyce Newton
*Crossett
Chair*

Mireya Reith
*Fayetteville
Vice Chair*

Dr. Jay Barth
Little Rock

Joe Black
Newport

Susan Chambers
Bella Vista

Charisse Dean
Little Rock

Vicki Saviers
Little Rock

R. Brett Williamson
El Dorado

Diane Zook
Melbourne

Dr. Hernandez's qualifications for the USAC board extend beyond his recent achievements. At the Arkansas Department of Education, Dr. Hernandez spearheaded efforts to enable data-driven decision-making through the digitization and analysis of educational data. In particular, he oversaw the implementation of statewide, cloud-based software designed to standardize district-level administrative procedures, as well as shepherding the creation of a database for curriculum and professional development materials. Through these experiences, Dr. Hernandez has acquired a visceral understanding of the transformational possibilities offered by connectivity and how a lack of access exacerbates the digital divide.

The Internet offers hope that no matter where a person lives, whether in Manhattan or the Ozarks, they have the opportunity to connect with others and engage in the greater American civic community. But today, for millions who live in rural American, basic connectivity is barely accessible. As rural electrification was in the past century, expanding connectivity to the far-flung corners of our nation is one of the challenges of our age. Meeting this challenge requires far more than funding; it is a question of determination and creativity. Monumental tasks of this sort require monumental leadership, and Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated the vision and skill necessary to achieve such a mission. I am confident that he will be an exceptional representative for America's superintendents on the USAC board.

I, on the behalf of the Division of Research and Technology respectfully request your approval of Dr. Hernandez's nomination to the USAC board of directors as a representative of schools eligible to receive E-rate.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Eric Saunders". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Eric" and last name "Saunders" clearly distinguishable.

Eric Saunders, Ed. D.
Assistant Commissioner
Research and Technology
Arkansas Department of Education

Four Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR
72201-1019
(501) 682-4475
ArkansasEd.gov

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August 12, 2015

William C. Decker, PhD
Education Technology Consultant
Roland, AR 72135
(501) 554-3750
cody@codydecker.com

In the Matter of: Nomination for Universal Service Administration Company Board of Directors, CC Docket Nos. 97-21 and 96-45

Dear Chairman Wheeler,

I write to express my strong support for the nomination of Dr. Michael Hernandez to the Universal Service Administrative Company's (USAC) Board of Directors. I was extremely pleased to learn that an administrator of Dr. Hernandez's caliber has been nominated and I welcome the opportunity to submit this letter of support.

In many Arkansas public school districts and open enrollment charter schools, broadband expansion is challenged by low population density and difficult terrain, making it cost prohibitive to provide adequate connectivity to thousands of students. Because of these obstacles, Arkansans have suffered from some of the nation's worst broadband availability, both at school and at home. In this environment, the E-rate program is often the only way our schools can provide their students with adequate Internet connections. As the former assistant commissioner of education for research and technology and as a current educational technology consultant, I wholeheartedly support the E-rate program because it is the cornerstone of our efforts to provide students with an education that will allow them to compete in the global marketplace of the 21st century. Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated extraordinary acumen at leveraging the E-rate program for the benefit of all Arkansans, and I am confident that he will bring the same skill and diligence to bear as a USAC board member.

When Dr. Hernandez became the Assistant Commissioner of the Arkansas Department of Education in 2014, the quality of school connectivity in Arkansas had reached a crisis point. The state was spending nearly \$280 per megabit, nearly 20 times the national average. Rural school districts had only antiquated copper connections, sometimes providing a mere 7 kbps per student. Dr. Hernandez help to spearhead a statewide effort to mobilize superintendents and local communities to better leverage Arkansas's E-rate funding. Under his leadership, a public-private partnership was established to provide every school district in Arkansas with a state-of-the-art fiber optic connection. This first in the nation solution is projected to save millions of dollars, provide every Arkansas student with gigabit connectivity, and has bipartisan backing in the Arkansas legislature. Building upon this plan, Arkansas is now one of a few states to mandate that every school district offer coding classes. I am confident that our state would never have reached this extraordinary milestone without Dr. Hernandez's leadership and knowledge.

Dr. Hernandez's qualifications for the USAC board extend beyond his recent achievements. He is a visionary, with a keen understanding of broadband, technology, and the need for complete, correct, and current data for all levels of stakeholders in the education industry. At the Arkansas Department of Education, Dr. Hernandez spearheaded efforts to enable data-driven decision-making through the digitization and analysis of educational data. In particular, he oversaw the implementation of statewide, cloud-based software designed to standardize district-level administrative procedures, as well as shepherding the creation of a database for curriculum and professional development materials. Through these experiences, Dr. Hernandez has acquired a visceral understanding of the transformational possibilities offered by connectivity and how a lack of access exacerbates the digital divide.

The Internet offers hope that no matter where a person lives, whether in Manhattan or the Ozarks, they have the opportunity to connect with others and engage in the greater American civic community. But today, for millions who live in rural America, basic connectivity is barely accessible. As rural electrification was in the past century, expanding connectivity to the far-flung corners of our nation is one of the challenges of our age. Meeting this challenge requires far more than funding; it is a question of determination and creativity. Monumental tasks of this sort require monumental leadership, and Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated the vision and skill necessary to achieve such a mission. I am confident that he will be an exceptional representative for America's superintendents on the USAC board.

I respectfully request your approval of Dr. Hernandez's nomination to the USAC board of directors as a representative of schools eligible to receive E-rate.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,

Sincerely,

William C. Decker

William C. Decker, PhD

De Queen School District

Phone: 870.584.4312
Fax: 870.642.8881

In the Matter of: Nomination for Universal Service Administration Company Board of Directors, CC Docket Nos. 97-21 and 96-45

Dear Chairman Wheeler,

On behalf of the De Queen School District in Arkansas I write to express our strong support for the nomination of Dr. Michael Hernandez to the Universal Service Administrative Company's (USAC) Board of Directors. I was extremely pleased to learn that an administrator of Dr. Hernandez's caliber has been nominated and I welcome the opportunity to submit this letter of support.

The De Queen School District represents a district with nearly 2400 students, located in rural Southwest Arkansas. My district serves a diverse population of students consisting of 60% Hispanic, 35% Caucasian, and 5% African American. The De Queen School District has a poverty level of 74%. In many of Arkansas districts, broadband expansion is challenged by low population density and difficult terrain, making it cost prohibitive to provide adequate connectivity to thousands of students. Because of these obstacles, Arkansans have suffered from some of the nation's worst broadband availability, both at school and at home. In this environment, the E-rate program is often the only way our superintendents can provide their students with adequate Internet connections. The De Queen School District wholeheartedly supports the E-rate program because it is the cornerstone of our efforts to provide students with an education that will allow them to compete in the global marketplace of the 21st century. Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated extraordinary acumen at leveraging the E-rate program for the benefit of all Arkansans, and I am confident that he will bring the same skill and diligence to bear as a USAC board member.

When Dr. Hernandez became the Assistant Commissioner of the Arkansas Department of Education in 2014, the quality of school connectivity in Arkansas had reached a crisis point. The state was spending nearly \$280 per megabit, nearly 20 times the national average. Rural school districts had only antiquated copper connections, sometimes providing a mere 7 kbps per student. Dr. Hernandez help to spearhead a statewide effort to mobilize superintendents and local communities to better leverage Arkansas's E-rate funding. Under his leadership, a public-private partnership was established to provide every school district in Arkansas with a state-of-the-art fiber optic connection. This first in the nation solution is projected to save millions of dollars, provide every Arkansas student with gigabit connectivity, and has bipartisan backing in the Arkansas legislature. Building upon this plan, Arkansas is now one of a few states to mandate that every school district offer coding classes. I am confident that our state would never have reached this extraordinary milestone without Dr. Hernandez's leadership and knowledge.

Dr. Hernandez's qualifications for the USAC board extend beyond his recent achievements. At the Arkansas Department of Education, Dr. Hernandez spearheaded efforts to enable data-driven decision-making through the digitization and analysis of educational data. In particular, he oversaw the implementation of statewide, cloud-based software designed to standardize district-level administrative procedures, as well as

shepherding the creation of a database for curriculum and professional development materials. Through these experiences, Dr. Hernandez has acquired a visceral understanding of the transformational possibilities offered by connectivity and how a lack of access exacerbates the digital divide.

The Internet offers hope that no matter where a person lives, whether in Manhattan or the Ozarks, they have the opportunity to connect with others and engage in the greater American civic community. But today, for millions who live in rural America, basic connectivity is barely accessible. As rural electrification was in the past century, expanding connectivity to the far-flung corners of our nation is one of the challenges of our age. Meeting this challenge requires far more than funding: it is a question of determination and creativity. Monumental tasks of this sort require monumental leadership, and Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated the vision and skill necessary to achieve such a mission. I am confident that he will be an exceptional representative for America's superintendents on the USAC board.

I, on the behalf of the De Queen School District, respectfully request your approval of Dr. Hernandez's nomination to the USAC board of directors as a representative of schools eligible to receive E-rate.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Bruce Hill". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bruce" and last name "Hill" clearly distinguishable.

Bruce Hill
De Queen School District Superintendent



Robert Jenkins, President

Brenda McKown, Vice President

Clay Goff, Secretary

Beebe Public Schools
1201 West Center Street
Beebe, Arkansas 72012
Phone 501-882-5463
Fax 501-882-5465

Janet Hines, Member

Harold Davis, Member

Dr. Belinda Shook, Superintendent

August 13, 2015

Dear Chairman Wheeler,

On behalf of the Beebe School District in Arkansas I write to express our strong support for the nomination of Dr. Michael Hernandez to the Universal Service Administrative Company's (USAC) Board of Directors. I was extremely pleased to learn that an administrator of Dr. Hernandez's caliber has been nominated and I welcome the opportunity to submit this letter of support.

The Beebe School District represents a district with nearly thirty-four hundred students. My district serves the patrons living in about two hundred thirty-five square miles located in the southern part of White County. This is a rural area with fifty-one percent in the low income bracket. Approximately seventy-eight percent of our funds come from state monies. In many of Arkansas' districts, broadband expansion is challenged by low population density and difficult terrain, making it cost prohibitive to provide adequate connectivity to thousands of students. Because of these obstacles, Arkansans have suffered from some of the nation's worst broadband availability, both at school and at home. In this environment, the E-rate program is often the only way our superintendents can provide their students with adequate Internet connections. The Beebe School District wholeheartedly supports the E-rate program because it is the cornerstone of our efforts to provide students with an education that will allow them to compete in the global marketplace of the 21st century. Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated extraordinary acumen at leveraging the E-rate program for the benefit of all Arkansans, and I am confident that he will bring the same skill and diligence to bear as a USAC board member.

When Dr. Hernandez became the Assistant Commissioner of the Arkansas Department of Education in 2014, the quality of school connectivity in Arkansas had reached a crisis point. The state was spending nearly \$280 per megabit, nearly 20 times the national average. Rural school districts had only antiquated copper connections, sometimes providing a mere 7 kbps per student. Dr. Hernandez helped spearhead a statewide effort to mobilize superintendents and local communities to better leverage Arkansas's E-rate funding. Under his leadership, a public-private partnership was established to provide every school district in Arkansas with a state-of-the-art fiber optic connection. This first in the nation solution is projected to save millions of dollars, provide every Arkansas student with gigabit connectivity, and has bipartisan backing in the Arkansas legislature. Building upon this plan, Arkansas is now one of a few states to mandate that every school district offer coding classes. I am confident that our state would never have reached this extraordinary milestone without Dr. Hernandez's leadership and knowledge.

Dr. Hernandez's qualifications for the USAC board extend beyond his recent achievements. In the past, he has served as teacher, principal, athletic director and superintendent. He assumed each new role with enthusiasm, and commitment to provide the best possible educational opportunities for students. At the Arkansas Department of Education, Dr. Hernandez spearheaded efforts to enable data-driven decision-making through the digitization and analysis of educational data. In particular, he oversaw the implementation of statewide, cloud-based software designed to standardize district-level administrative procedures, as well as shepherding the creation of a database for curriculum and professional development materials. Through these experiences, Dr. Hernandez has acquired a visceral understanding of the transformational possibilities offered by connectivity and how a lack of access exacerbates the digital divide.

The Internet offers hope that no matter where a person lives, whether in Manhattan or the Ozarks, they have the opportunity to connect with others and engage in the greater American civic community. But today, for millions who live in rural American, basic connectivity is barely accessible. As rural electrification was in the past century, expanding connectivity to the far-flung corners of our nation is one of the challenges of our age. Meeting this challenge requires far more than funding; it is a question of determination and creativity. Monumental tasks of this sort require monumental leadership, and Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated the vision and skill necessary to achieve such a mission. I am confident that he will be an exceptional representative for America's superintendents on the USAC board.

I, on the behalf of the Beebe School District, respectfully request your approval of Dr. Hernandez's nomination to the USAC board of directors as a representative of schools eligible to receive E-rate.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration when considering the appointment of Dr. Michael Hernandez to the Universal Service Administrative Company's Board of Directors.

Sincerely,



Dr. Belinda Shook
Superintendent



2700 Poplar Street • P.O. Box 687 • North Little Rock, Arkansas 72115-0687
(501) 771-8000 www.nlrsd.org

August 12, 2015

In the Matter of: Nomination for Universal Service Administration Company Board of Directors,
CC Docket Nos. 97-21 and 96-45

Dear Chairman Wheeler,

On behalf of the North Little Rock School District in Arkansas I write to express our strong support for the nomination of Dr. Michael Hernandez to the Universal Service Administrative Company's (USAC) Board of Directors. I was extremely pleased to learn that an administrator of Dr. Hernandez's caliber has been nominated and I welcome the opportunity to submit this letter of support.

The North Little Rock School District represents a district with nearly 9,340 students, in an urban setting with 70% labeled economically disadvantaged. In many of Arkansas districts, broadband expansion is challenged by low population density and difficult terrain, making it cost prohibitive to provide adequate connectivity to thousands of students. Because of these obstacles, Arkansans have suffered from some of the nation's worst broadband availability, both at school and at home. In this environment, the E-rate program is often the only way our superintendents can provide their students with adequate Internet connections. The North Little Rock School District wholeheartedly supports the E-rate program because it is the cornerstone of our efforts to provide students with an education that will allow them to compete in the global marketplace of the 21st century. Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated extraordinary acumen at leveraging the E-rate program for the benefit of all Arkansans, and I am confident that he will bring the same skill and diligence to bear as a USAC board member.

When Dr. Hernandez became the Assistant Commissioner of the Arkansas Department of Education in 2014, the quality of school connectivity in Arkansas had reached a crisis point. The state was spending nearly \$280 per megabit, nearly 20 times the national average. Rural school districts had only antiquated copper connections, sometimes providing a mere 7 kbps per student. Dr. Hernandez helped to spearhead a statewide effort to mobilize superintendents and local communities to better leverage Arkansas's E-rate funding. Under his leadership, a public-private partnership was established to provide every school district in Arkansas with a state-of-the-art fiber optic connection. This first in the nation solution is projected to save millions of dollars, provide every Arkansas student with gigabit connectivity, and has bipartisan backing in the Arkansas legislature. Building upon this plan, Arkansas is now one of a few states to mandate that every

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school district offer coding classes. I am confident that our state would never have reached this extraordinary milestone without Dr. Hernandez's leadership and knowledge.


Dr. Hernandez's qualifications for the USAC board extend beyond his recent achievements. At the Arkansas Department of Education, Dr. Hernandez spearheaded efforts to enable data-driven decision-making through the digitization and analysis of educational data. In particular, he oversaw the implementation of statewide, cloud-based software designed to standardize district-level administrative procedures, as well as shepherding the creation of a database for curriculum and professional development materials. Through these experiences, Dr. Hernandez has acquired a visceral understanding of the transformational possibilities offered by connectivity and how a lack of access exacerbates the digital divide.

The Internet offers hope that no matter where a person lives, whether in Manhattan or the Ozarks, they have the opportunity to connect with others and engage in the greater American civic community. But today, for millions who live in rural America, basic connectivity is barely accessible. As rural electrification was in the past century, expanding connectivity to the far-flung corners of our nation is one of the challenges of our age. Meeting this challenge requires far more than funding: it is a question of determination and creativity. Monumental tasks of this sort require monumental leadership, and Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated the vision and skill necessary to achieve such a mission. I am confident that he will be an exceptional representative for America's superintendents on the USAC board.

I, on the behalf of the North Little Rock School District, respectfully request your approval of Dr. Hernandez's nomination to the USAC board of directors as a representative of schools eligible to receive E-rate.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,

Sincerely,


Kelly Rodgers
Superintendent of Schools

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Office of the Superintendent

408 Cherry Street | PO Box 1210
Warren, Arkansas 71671

(P) 870.226.8500
(F) 870.226.8531



WARREN
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Our Mission ~ Personalized Learning

In the Matter of: Nomination for Universal Service Administration Company Board of Directors,
CC Docket Nos. 97-21 and 96-45

Dear Chairman Wheeler,

On behalf of the Warren School District in Arkansas I write to express our strong support for the nomination of Dr. Michael Hernandez to the Universal Service Administrative Company's (USAC) Board of Directors. I was extremely pleased to learn that an administrator of Dr. Hernandez's caliber has been nominated and I welcome the opportunity to submit this letter of support.

The Warren School District represents a district with nearly 1,700 students, Southeast rural Arkansas. My district serves over 70 percent low-income families in rural Arkansas. In many of Arkansas districts, broadband expansion is challenged by low population density and difficult terrain, making it cost prohibitive to provide adequate connectivity to thousands of students. Because of these obstacles, Arkansans have suffered from some of the nation's worst broadband availability, both at school and at home. In this environment, the E-rate program is often the only way our superintendents can provide their students with adequate Internet connections. The Warren School District wholeheartedly supports the E-rate program because it is the cornerstone of our efforts to provide students with an education that will allow them to compete in the global marketplace of the 21st century. Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated extraordinary expertise and insight at leveraging the E-rate program for the benefit of all Arkansans, and I am confident that he will bring the same skill and diligence to bear as a USAC board member.

When Dr. Hernandez became the Assistant Commissioner of the Arkansas Department of Education in 2014, the quality of school connectivity in Arkansas had reached a crisis point. The state was spending nearly \$280 per megabit, nearly 20 times the national average. Rural school districts had only antiquated copper connections, sometimes providing a mere 7 kbps per student. Dr. Hernandez helped to spearhead a statewide effort to mobilize superintendents and local communities to better leverage Arkansas's E-rate funding. Under his leadership, a public-private partnership was established to provide every school district in Arkansas with a state-of-the-art fiber optic connection. This first in the nation solution is projected to save millions of dollars,

provide every Arkansas student with gigabit connectivity, and has bipartisan backing in the Arkansas legislature. Building upon this plan, Arkansas is now one of a few states to mandate that every school district offer coding classes. I am confident that our state would never have reached this extraordinary milestone without Dr. Hernandez's leadership and knowledge.

Dr. Hernandez's qualifications for the USAC board extend beyond his recent achievements. I have known Dr. Hernandez for several years as, Superintendent, Deputy Commissioner, and I highly recommend him for this position on your board. At the Arkansas Department of Education, Dr. Hernandez spearheaded efforts to enable data-driven decision-making through the digitization and analysis of educational data. In particular, he oversaw the implementation of statewide, cloud-based software designed to standardize district-level administrative procedures, as well as shepherding the creation of a database for curriculum and professional development materials. Through these experiences, Dr. Hernandez has acquired a visceral understanding of the transformational possibilities offered by connectivity and how a lack of access exacerbates the digital divide.

The Internet offers hope that no matter where a person lives, whether in Manhattan or the Ozarks, they have the opportunity to connect with others and engage in the greater American civic community. But today, for millions who live in rural American, basic connectivity is barely accessible. As rural electrification was in the past century, expanding connectivity to the far-flung corners of our nation is one of the challenges of our age. Meeting this challenge requires far more than funding: it is a question of determination and creativity. Monumental tasks of this sort require monumental leadership, and Dr. Hernandez has repeatedly demonstrated the vision and skill necessary to achieve such a mission. I am confident that he will be an exceptional representative for America's superintendents on the USAC board.

I, on the behalf of the Warren School District, respectfully request your approval of Dr. Hernandez's nomination to the USAC board of directors as a representative of schools eligible to receive E-rate.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bobby J. Acklin".

Bobby J. Acklin, Superintendent of schools